

# Community For A Lifetime



A Ten Year Strategic Plan to Advance  
the Well-Being of Older Adults in  
Santa Clara County

# COMMUNITY FOR A LIFETIME

## A Ten-Year Strategic Plan To Advance The Well-Being Of Older Adults In Santa Clara County

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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FEBRUARY 2005

JOINTLY SPONSORED BY:  
THE CITY OF SAN JOSÉ AND THE COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA

PREPARED IN COLLABORATION WITH:  
THE STRATEGIC PLAN ADVISORY GROUP  
&  
MGT OF AMERICA, INC.



455 CAPITOL MALL, SUITE 600 • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814  
(916) 443-3411  
WWW.MGTOFAMERICA.COM

February 1, 2005

Dear Community Members,

Meeting the needs of older adults will be one of the biggest challenges faced by our community over the next twenty years. Providing services that help keep older adults healthy, independent, and active in our community will be more essential than ever.

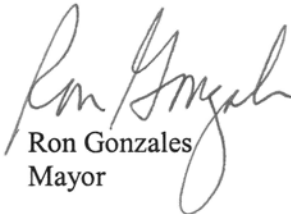
In 1994 the City of San José completed a Master Plan entitled "Planning for the Age Wave," a ten-year strategy for providing aging services. This plan resulted in expanded collaboration between the City, the County of Santa Clara, and the many community-based organizations that provide services to older adults. Due to the success of these collaborations and the need to continue to meet the challenges of providing services to a rapidly growing senior population, the City of San José partnered with the County to develop an updated strategic plan to address the changing needs of our diverse older adult population throughout the county. Over 1,100 community members from virtually every sector and age group contributed their ideas and vision to the development of this plan.

The Strategic Plan, "**Community for a Lifetime**", builds on the leadership already in place, the passion and skills available from service providers and advocates alike, and the spirit of collaboration that our community cherishes.

On behalf of the entire City Council, I thank the members of the Strategic Plan Advisory Group who contributed hundreds of hours to this project. They represent a cross-section of the many areas of expertise in our community, from seniors and advocates to service providers, both public and private. Their generous contributions of time and wisdom were invaluable in helping to shape this document.

It is with great pride and pleasure that I along with my colleagues on the City Council, present this Aging Services Strategic Plan to you, and invite your involvement in helping make the Plan's recommendations become reality.

Sincerely,

  
Ron Gonzales  
Mayor

## County of Santa Clara

Office of the Board of Supervisors

County Government Center, East Wing  
70 West Hedding Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Jose, California 95110  
(408) 299-5030  
FAX 298-6637 TDD 993-8272



January 5, 2005

Dear Fellow Community Members,

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Mayor and City Council for funding and supporting this project as well as Councilmember Ken Yeager and Supervisor Don Gage for jointly chairing the Strategic Planning Advisory Group. Their leadership in supporting and funding County services has made a great difference in our community. This joint strategic plan further confirms their commitment to the County's older population. We would also like to thank the members of the Joint Strategic Plan Advisory Group, the City and County Senior Commissioners, and community based organizations who volunteered countless hours in an effort to advise the project and hear community input. Their feedback has been critical in the development of strategies and recommendations for implementation.

In 1994 the City of San Jose completed their 10 year Master Plan entitled "Planning for the Age Wave," a ten year plan for providing aging services. One of the major recommendations of this plan was the formation of the Aging Leadership Council. The County participated as an active partner since its inception and collaborated on multiple projects. As an outgrowth of this collaboration, and in an effort to update the 1994 plan, the County requested that the City and County partner jointly to develop one comprehensive plan that could service the needs of all elderly in the County.

The result of the above endeavor, the joint strategic plan, provides a practical vision for aging services in Santa Clara County over the next ten years. This vision can be achieved through implementation of the Plan's strategy recommendations, all of which originated from community input. Implementation of this vision is critical if Santa Clara County is to meet the challenge of providing "A Community for a Lifetime." We look forward to seeing this vision become a working reality.

Sincerely,

Liz Kniss,  
Chair, Board of Supervisors  
District 5

Donald F. Gage  
Board of Supervisors, District 1

Pete McHugh  
Board of Supervisors, District 3

Blanca Alvarado  
Board of Supervisors, District 2

James T. Beall, Jr.  
Board of Supervisors, District 4



February 1, 2005

Dear Fellow Community Members,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to the development of the Aging Services Strategic Plan. This project was truly a community effort. Over 1,100 community members shared their time and experiences in the many town hall meetings, focus groups, and surveys that were held to develop the Older Adult Needs Assessment. Volunteers from senior programs and community based organizations provided translation services to gather input from monolingual older adults of many backgrounds. Senior service providers volunteered their time and expertise to serve as focus group participants and facilitators, as well as providing input for the development of the strategies presented in this plan.

We would also like to thank the members of the Strategic Plan Advisory Group who gave so freely of their wealth of experience and knowledge to help guide the development of the Strategic Plan. Together they donated over 1,000 volunteer hours to advise the Project, conduct study sessions, hear community input, and review the draft plan.

The Strategic Plan, "**Community for a Lifetime**", provides a practical vision for meeting the needs of older adults and their families over the next ten years. This vision can be achieved through implementation of the Plan's strategy recommendations, all of which originated in community input. Implementation of this vision is critical now if we are to be prepared support the needs of our aging population and the community as a whole.

Sincerely,

**Donald F. Gage**  
Santa Clara County  
Board of Supervisors, District 1

**Ken Yeager**  
City of San José  
Council Member, District 6

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### DEPARTMENT OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES

Betty F. Malks, Director



# STRATEGIC PLAN ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS

## CO-CHAIRS

County Supervisor Don Gage and City Councilmember Ken Yeager

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

Joan Carrico  
Laura Cunningham  
Diane Lindberg  
Betty F. Malks  
Cathy Noonan

San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services  
Santa Clara County Department of Aging and Adult Services  
San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services  
Santa Clara County Department of Aging and Adult Services  
San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services

## ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS

Julie Aragon  
Georgia Bacil  
Deb Bogart  
Sunshine Borelli  
Alan Briscoe  
Kathryn Brown  
Jamie Buckmaster  
Robert Cecil  
Connie Corrales  
Marilou Cristina  
Richard Crosetti  
Sandi Douglas  
Megan Doyle  
Christina Gilmore  
Mayor Ron Gonzales  
Sara Hensley  
Nancy Hikoyeda  
Seema Jaffee  
Najoo Junck  
Sue LaForge  
Lorraine Larson  
Eva Lee  
Councilmember Linda LeZotte  
Les Lindop  
Avo Makdessian  
George Miskulin  
Patricia Brown Moriarty  
Jim Murphy  
Sandra Nathan  
Chad Payne  
Ashlee Oh  
David Peyton  
Jim Ramoni  
Alex Sanchez  
Stephen Schmoll  
Ron Schoof  
Jane Schwartz  
Ron Schwartz  
Brent Shiramizu  
Betsy Shotwell  
Laura Talavera  
Roland Velasco  
Maureen Wadiak  
Donice Wagner  
Jennifer Wells  
Elissa Young  
Regina Zamba

Santa Clara County Department of Aging and Adult Services  
Senior Adults Legal Assistance  
San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services  
Office of County Supervisor Jim Beall  
San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services  
Economic and Social Opportunities  
Santa Clara County Department of Aging and Adult Services  
Santa Clara County Department of Aging and Adult Services  
Council on Aging of Silicon Valley  
Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County  
Office of Councilmember Ken Yeager  
Housing Authority of Santa Clara County  
Office of Councilmember Ken Yeager  
Office of Councilmember Linda LeZotte  
City of San José  
San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services  
San José State University Gerontology Program  
San José Senior Citizens Commission  
San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services  
National Council on Aging  
Council on Aging of Silicon Valley  
San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services  
City of San José City Council  
Santa Clara County Department of Aging and Adult Services  
Office of Mayor Ron Gonzales  
San José Senior Citizens Commission  
San José Senior Citizens Commission  
Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital System  
Office of the County Executive  
Office of Mayor Ron Gonzales  
Office of County Supervisor Jim Beall  
San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services  
Santa Clara County Department of Aging and Adult Services  
Housing Authority of Santa Clara County  
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San José Senior Citizens Commission  
San José Senior Citizens Commission  
San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services  
Office of the City Manager  
San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services  
Office of Supervisor Don Gage  
Community Services Agency  
San José Senior Citizens Commission  
Office of Supervisor Pete McHugh  
San José Senior Citizens Commission  
San José Senior Citizens Commission

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Project Management Team would like to thank the following individuals for their contributions to this document:

Mayor Ron Gonzales, the San José City Council, and the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors for their commitment to meeting the needs of older adults in Santa Clara County, for funding the Strategic Plan Project, and for their continued support of aging services.

Former San José Councilmember Alice Woody, who chaired the first Aging Services Strategic Plan Advisory Group until her term ended in 2000, and who was a tireless champion of aging services in San José. She initiated the idea to update the 1994 Aging Services Master Plan, Planning for the Age Wave, with a Strategic Plan to ensure that the City continued to build on its successes and plan for seniors' unmet needs.

Larry Silva and the Yellow Checker Cab Company for providing free transportation to over 80 seniors attending the two town hall meetings. Many of the seniors who utilized this service remarked upon the patience, caring, and professionalism of the drivers, many of whom took time to personally escort their passengers into the meeting room.

To the many volunteers who facilitated, translated, and/or took notes at the town hall meetings including: Leonie Adga, Pat Adga, Maria Elena Aguilar, Marie Alberry-Hawkins, Leonard Antuna, Julie Aragon, Michelle Arimeoanga, Aurelia Bailey, Leona Bishop, Felicia Bland, Janine Bray, Alan Briscoe, Robert Cecil, Celine Chan, Virginia Chan, Lupe Cino, Marilou Cristina, Rachel Ehlers, Michelle Estabillo, Tracey Giglione, Jane Hemeon, Ellen Hertel, Nancy Hikoyeda, Kevin Hirabyashi, Seema Jaffee, Ann John, Estelle Kadis, Mary Lanip, Eva Lee, Les Lindop, Marciano Lleverino, Lupe Maldonado, Jackie Mattison, Judy Mitchem, Carolyn Mosby, Melissa Monsees, Patricia Brown Moriarty, Dong Nguyen, Mary O'Meara, Lina Pan, Kim Peterson, April Rogers, Ron Schwartz, Brent Shiramizu, Laura Talavera, Traci Tokunaga, Rhonda Vargas, Maureen Wadiak, Tina Wong-Erling, Kendra Yarn, Heidi York, Elissa Young, and Sally Zietzke.

The staff of the Berryessa Community Center and the Southside Senior Center for hosting the two town hall meetings and assisting with meeting logistics.

The staff of Willows Senior Center, Cypress Senior Center, Billy de Frank Community Center, John XXIII Multi-Service Center, Eastside Neighborhood Center, Morgan Hill Senior Center, and all those who helped host the many focus groups held for this project.



Elissa Young, Marilou Cristina, Maureen Wadiak , Jim Ramoni, and Julie Aragon who volunteered to set up and facilitate multiple focus groups on older adult needs. Your leadership and enthusiastic commitment to this project helped ensure the participation of community members from many different cultures and backgrounds.

To Leonardo Antuna, Patrocinio Agda, Leon Agda, Chau Dinh, Virginia Chan, Nina Pan, Nhi Hua, Marciano Lleverino, and Laura Talavera, and all those who volunteered their time to translate the event flyers, mailings, and phone survey into Spanish, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Cantonese, and Tagalog. Their efforts were instrumental in increasing participation and gathering input from monolingual seniors throughout the County.



The staff of the Hayes Mansion and Conference Center, the San José Convention Center, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, Leininger Center, and particularly Cathy Noble and the staff of the Shirakawa Community Center for providing meeting space and room set up for the monthly Strategic Plan Advisory Group meetings.

The staff of the City of San José Office on Aging, including Najoo Junck, Lupe Maldonado, Cristina Redila, Laura Talevera, Tracey Giglione, Judy Mitchem, Sally Zietzke, Eva Lee, Brent Shiramizu, and Marciano Lleverino for all their help with mailings, outreach, translations, meeting coordination, assistance and special events and overall support throughout the project.

San José Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services staff, including Marie-Alberry Hawkins, Michelle Estabillo, and Kara Capaldo for all their technical assistance and support.

The Strategic Plan Advisory Group, the San José Senior Citizen's Commission and the County Senior Care Commission for their commitment to aging services and the older population, for providing input into the project, and for providing feedback on the draft plan.

Karin Bloomer, Maureen Lyon-Grow, and Margaret Lynn Duggar of MGT of America for all their patience, energy, and focus.

And lastly, to the over 1,100 seniors, caregivers, family members, program staff, community-based organization staff, City staff, and County staff who gave input on the needs of older adults. This project was a true community effort to address the needs of older adults in Santa Clara County.

Thank you one and all,

The Project Management Team



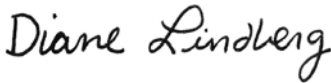
**Joan Carrico**

Deputy Director  
City of San José  
Department of Parks, Recreation,  
And Neighborhood Services



**Betty F. Mals**

Director  
Santa Clara County Department of  
Aging and Adult Services



**Diane Lindberg**

Community Services Supervisor  
City of San José Office on Aging  
Department of Parks, Recreation,  
And Neighborhood Services



**Laura Cunningham**

Sr. Management Analyst  
Santa Clara County Department of  
Aging and Adult Services



**Cathy Noonan**

Analyst  
City of San José Office on Aging  
Department of Parks, Recreation,  
And Neighborhood Services

## FOREWORD

In 1994, the City of San José initiated the development of an Aging Services Master Plan, **Planning for the Age Wave**. The two-year Master Plan project involved hundreds of community leaders and stakeholders as members of the project's Advisory Group and provided the formation of the Mayor's Aging Leadership Council. This council provided information on senior demographics, needs, service levels, and recommendations on strategies.

The City of San Jose's Aging Services Master Plan emphasized the importance of the coming "Age Wave"\*, an anticipated doubling of the city's senior population. Among the most significant achievements of this project was the first major City and County of Santa Clara collaboration on a planning project. City and County collaboration continued from the design and development phase throughout the implementation period, and was one of the key ingredients involved in the successes of the Plan.

Following the City Council's 1994 adoption of the Master Plan as a ten year plan, implementation began by establishing the Mayor's Aging Leadership Council and five working groups which brought together community members, the County of Santa Clara, the Council on Aging of Silicon Valley, the San José Senior Citizens Commission, the City Office on Aging and other staff to work on specific plan recommendations. The Mayor's Aging Leadership Council convened a forty-member group of community leaders and stakeholders who represented senior groups from throughout San Jose and the County to guide Master Plan implementation and focus on shared concerns. The Advocacy Working Group brought key decision makers together to address the need for a unified voice of advocacy for aging issues. Members shared information on legislation and policy issues, and worked collaboratively on advocacy actions. The Multicultural Working Group addressed the unmet needs of limited-English speaking seniors by developing and translating hundreds of information fact sheets and other materials on health care, housing and other critically important senior need topics. The Multicultural Working Group developed the Multilingual Senior Services Locator, an informational chart included in Senior Services Directories, which identified the top twelve services available in the most prevalent ten languages spoken by limited-English seniors in San Jose. It also produced two Multicultural Festivals, which showcased the cultures and foods of San Jose's ethnic seniors, allowing seniors to share in ways that transcended language barriers. The Outreach Working Group addressed the need for information on services by conducting an information campaign and planning for information and outreach events. The



Paraprofessional Case Manager Working Group recruited, trained and placed volunteer paraprofessional case managers to work with professional case managers and expand the number of seniors that could be served. The Public – Private Partnership Working Group convened a conference attended by nearly one hundred members from both the business and public sector to develop ways they could work together, particularly in creating additional funding for aging services.

In 2000, Councilmember Alice Woody and the Mayor's Aging Leadership Council recognized the need to update the needs assessment and strategies developed in 1994. To accomplish this goal, San José Mayor Ron Gonzales allocated monies in his June 2001 Budget Message for the development of an updated Aging Services Strategic Plan.



As a result of the collaboration between agencies on the Mayor's Aging Leadership Council, an opportunity to partner with the Santa Clara County Department of Aging and Adult Services arose. The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors approved funding to expand the scope of the strategic plan. A project management team consisting of City and County staff was developed to coordinate the Strategic Plan. The project management team then developed a Strategic Plan Advisory Group comprised of key stakeholders including individuals from: community based organizations, County and City Senior Commissions, academia and service providers. City and County aging services have a long history of successful collaboration and this project is another example.

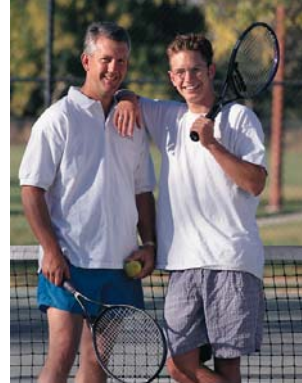
One of the dilemmas faced by the project management team was how to focus the scope of this report. The needs of older adults run the gamut from basic survival needs such as food, shelter and safety to quality of life issues such as continuing education, recreation, and socialization. The team chose to focus on the eleven issues that were most commonly brought up by seniors, caregivers, family members, and aging services experts who participated in the needs assessment: **Housing, Information, Language, Health Care, Transportation, In-Home Care, Caregiver Support, Senior Center Programs, Leadership, Coordination, and Funding.**

Another dilemma faced by the project management team was the absence of key issues which did not surface during the process. Given the fact that this document was a community effort and is a reflection of the individuals interviewed using various modalities, the general consensus among professional staff was that some key areas did not rise to the surface in this process. These issues include: Elder Abuse/Safety issues, Medical/Discharge Planning, Long

Term Care, End of Life issues/Hospice, and Mental Health issues/Depression among the elderly. It was widely felt that issues such as these were not raised by the community because of their sensitivity and/or personal nature. However these areas are of paramount importance and in need of future examination.

It should be noted that many other issues were cited during the needs assessment; and although they were not among the most prevalent issues chosen for inclusion in this plan, it does not diminish their importance. Lastly, some older adult needs may have gone unreported because current services are meeting the existing need.

The Strategic Plan has been developed in an economic context of extreme hardship for local governments and for many of the constituents they serve. Funding for aging services at the federal, state and local levels has been unable to keep pace with the population increase and continues to be a challenge. City and County funding levels have been severely reduced for several years, with additional cuts projected for the coming fiscal year. These budget cuts, compounded by reductions in state and federal funding, have meant less funding available for aging services. At the same time the senior population continues to increase. For this reason, specific funding recommendations were not included in this plan at this time. However, this issue should be addressed as soon as funding becomes available. It is imperative that the current aging services infrastructure of senior centers and programs be preserved at current levels through this difficult period, and services and facilities be increased when additional funding occurs. City and County collaboration and leadership are key in assuring protection of the existing aging services infrastructure and nurturing services growth to meet future needs.



### ***Aging - By the Numbers***

*According to the United States Census Bureau there are approximately 220,600 older adults living in Santa Clara County. This number is projected to nearly double to 428,300 by the year 2020, when older adults will represent 21.3% of the County's population.*



Finally, it is important to remember that in order to truly meet the needs of older adults, we must go beyond simply implementing additional senior programs and services. A philosophical change is necessary to ensure that the needs of our aging population are incorporated into the design and planning of every program, service, and facility to truly embrace the concept of a 'Community for a Lifetime.'

***A philosophical change is necessary to ensure that the needs of our aging population are included in the design and planning of every program, service, and facility we provide.***

We have already seen the first ripples of the coming "Age Wave." The senior population has grown by 18.8% since the first Aging Services Master Plan was written, and the first of the baby boom generation will turn sixty in 2006. The California Strategic Plan on Aging Advisory Committee took the analogy of the "Age Wave" one step further in their May 2004 report **Preparing for an Aging California Population** stating, "The

confluence of decreased fertility, expanded longevity, falling mortality, and the redefinition of what it means to be older is creating a unique phenomenon, which some have described as an Aging Tsunami." The time to be strategic about planning for aging services is now. We need to develop comprehensive services, programs, and facilities that support the entire family throughout the aging process. To accomplish this is to ensure that those living in Santa Clara County and its municipalities will truly be part of a '**Community for a Lifetime.**'



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\*"Age Wave" is a term coined by Ken Dychtwald, Ph.D., and is used with his permission.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## BACKGROUND

Two years ago, the City of San José, the County of Santa Clara, and community partners from local public and private organizations embarked on a process to develop a long-term strategic plan that supports and advances the well-being of the county's older adult members.

Undoubtedly, the time to plan for aging services is now. Santa Clara County has already begun to experience disproportionate growth in its population of persons aged 60 years and older, and by 2020 this population will have almost doubled and grown at a pace three-to-four times that of the county's overall population.

At the same time, Santa Clara County and the state as a whole have recently encountered a budget crisis that has forced service providers to reduce program spending. Data shows that program expenditures for senior services within Santa Clara County have been dropping, while service levels and waiting lists have grown. As the population of older adults explodes over the next 10 to 20 years, this erosion of resources for senior services will likely have dramatic impacts on senior members of the community and their families. The purpose of this strategic plan is to help the community of Santa Clara County focus its finite resources on the most prominent needs of its seniors and work in collaboration to build a service infrastructure that can support its burgeoning senior population.

***Santa Clara County has already begun to experience disproportionate growth in its population of persons aged 60 years and older***

## METHODOLOGY

Over 1,100 community members—comprised of seniors, family members, advocates, elected officials, service providers, and academics—participated in the development of this strategic plan. A 40-member Strategic Plan Advisory Group, representing government and community-based organizations, met monthly to steer the effort. Day-to-day management of the project was led by a team from San José Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services; Santa Clara County Department of Aging and Adult Services; and MGT of America, Inc.—the consultant hired to assist with the process.

The planning process consisted of two primary elements—identifying older adults’ needs and developing strategies for addressing them.

## Countywide Senior Needs Assessment

Three methods were utilized to identify older adults’ needs in Santa Clara County—a telephone survey, community input events, and expert interviews.

**Telephone Survey**—A randomized telephone survey was used to conduct a broad assessment of the characteristics, status, and needs of older adults in Santa Clara County. The survey sample consisted of 504 adults, aged 60 years and older, who were called at random. Phone interviewers were equipped to conduct the interview in the five most prominent languages in the county—English, Spanish, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Tagalog.

**Community Input Events**—The City and County hosted two “town hall meetings” that were open to the public, 20 focus groups with older adults and those concerned about their needs, and interviews with 29 homebound seniors who could not otherwise attend an event. In total, over 630 individuals participated in the community input events.

The town hall meetings were held in San José, where the largest concentration of older adults lives, and were open to any and all interested community



members. The meetings were advertised in the county’s five most prominent languages, and interpreters for multiple languages, including American Sign Language, assisted at the meetings to translate discussions and input provided by participants. Free taxi rides to and from the events were sponsored by the San José Mayor’s Office, so that community members with impaired mobility or lacking transportation could attend.

Focus groups were conducted with representatives from the following communities: Korean seniors; Chinese seniors; Vietnamese seniors; Filipino seniors; Latino seniors; Indo American (Hindi and Punjabi) seniors; Mountain View and Los Altos seniors; West San José seniors; Willow Glen seniors; Morgan Hill seniors; Gilroy seniors; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender seniors; caregiving seniors, senior center/nutrition site staff; family caregivers of seniors; and seniors in residential care.

These communities were selected to participate in focus groups for one or both of the following reasons: focus groups were perceived as a more comfortable and culturally sensitive setting for the community to share its needs, and focus

groups offered a way to bolster the community's representation in the needs assessment. These settings were also more accessible for some participants, such as caregivers; adult day care and childcare were offered during these focus groups. The needs assessment effort also reached out to seniors who were unable to leave their homes to attend the other community input events. Phone interviews were conducted with a random sample of 29 homebound seniors who participate in the county's In-Home Supportive Services and Senior Nutrition programs.

**Expert Interviews**—Expert interviews comprised the third arm of the Countywide Senior Needs Assessment. The Strategic Plan Advisory Group identified local experts whose policy and service expertise included that of health, transportation, housing, nutrition, information and referral, in-home care, legal services, recreation, education, and community services. Input from these experts offered a valuable point of reference to older adults' responses in the phone survey and community input events.

**Analysis of Findings**—Results of the needs assessment were first examined independently to identify the most frequently cited needs from each of the three research methods—telephone survey, community input events, and expert interviews. These findings were then compared across research methods for common themes. When a need was noted with great frequency in two or more research methods, that need was considered significant and one that warranted focus from the community in the strategic plan.

## Strategies for Addressing Seniors' Needs

Once the most prevalent needs were identified through the needs assessment, local experts in the relevant service areas were invited to a Strategy Development Session to discuss the findings and develop strategies that local government and community organizations could undertake to meet these needs. Over 60 experts attended the session, broke into service-specific workgroups, and produced strategies that they believed would be feasible and appropriate for local action to address the needs identified in the needs assessment.

## Review of the Plan

Community input was solicited again during the development of the written product. A draft of the strategic plan was shared with three civic bodies for review and input—the Strategic Plan Advisory Group, the San José Senior Citizens Commission, and the Santa Clara County Senior Care Commission. Comments and suggested changes were reviewed by the project management team, assessed for common themes, and—where possible—incorporated in the plan.

## METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

By undertaking a community-driven approach to strategic planning, the process ensured that the service needs identified reflected pervasive local issues and that the strategies for solving them were realistic and feasible for organizations to undertake in Santa Clara County.

This approach also introduced some limitations that are important to note. First, soliciting input from over 1,100 community members meant that myriad service needs were raised through the course of the needs assessment. Not all of these needs could be addressed in the strategic plan. By its nature, a strategic plan needs to focus on select issues that are pervasive in a community. For this reason, only those needs that were common across community input methods were highlighted in the plan.

Relying on community members' input to identify pervasive service needs also meant that needs that are particularly sensitive or difficult for individuals to express were unlikely to present themselves in the needs assessment and, consequently, in the strategic plan. Service needs related to mental health, elder abuse, and end-of-life care, for example, are often uncomfortable topics for discussion and were not commonly noted during the needs assessment. These areas of need warrant assessment through other means and community action to address them.

Finally, because the focus of the needs assessment was on identifying *unmet* needs, services that older adults currently rely upon and receive were unlikely to have been expressed by community members. These existing services should not be jeopardized for the sake of focusing resources on the unmet needs that have been identified through the Countywide Senior Needs Assessment.



## KEY NEEDS ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

### Top Two Service Needs

Two service needs surfaced as prevalent issues across all three information gathering methods of the needs assessment. These were:

- **Transportation**—specifically: limited availability of paratransit services; lack of assistance boarding public transit; and limited access to public transportation.
- **Information**—specifically: lack of information about how to access services.

Participants in the countywide phone survey, community input events, and expert interviews all pointed to transportation and information as critical needs of older adults in Santa Clara County.

### Additional Key Service Needs

Six more service needs arose as top concerns to older adults in two of the three input methods. These were:

- **Housing**—specifically: lack of affordable housing and lack of affordable home repair.
- **Language**—specifically: more prevalent lack of information about services for older adults who do not speak English as a primary language.
- **Health Care**—specifically: lack of health professionals with gerontology/geriatric training and poor linkages between health care and long-term care.
- **In-Home Care**—specifically: shortage of affordable in-home care services and lack of care management services.
- **Caregiver Support**—specifically: lack of support for older adults' caregiving.
- **Senior Center Programs**—specifically: desire for senior centers to provide information and assistance services, including legal assistance, and management and coordination services for people who need in-home care or assisted living;

and need for senior centers to prepare to serve the disparate interests of baby boomers and older seniors.

These key needs are not listed in any priority order, as each was given the same valuation for being one of the most commonly cited needs in two of the three research methods.

## Key Resource Needs

Only in the expert interviews were participants asked about resource needs for senior services. Experts pointed to two types of resources that they felt were critical to advancing the well-being of older adults in Santa Clara County. These were:

- **Leadership and Coordination**—specifically: lack of coordinated leadership and advocacy for aging services.
- **Funding**—specifically: stagnating or decreasing funding for services despite increase in need for services.

These ten areas of need—eight service areas and two resource areas—constitute the focus of the objectives and strategies of the strategic plan.

## Aging - By the Numbers

*In 2000, the average life expectancy in the United States was almost 80 years for women and roughly 74 years for men.*

*By 2050, life expectancy in the United States is a projected to rise to an average age of 87 years for women and 81 years for men.*

2000 U.S. Census



## ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The fundamental components of a strategic plan are its vision statement, mission statement, goals, objectives, and strategies. The key elements of this strategic plan are presented below.

### Our Vision for an Elder-Friendly Santa Clara County

The vision statement reflects the community's *ultimate* goal in supporting older adults in Santa Clara County—our image of the desired future. Though we may never fully attain this vision, it is one that we are committed to strive toward. Our vision is as follows:

*Each person living in the City of San José and the County of Santa Clara respects older adults. This community values the contributions, strengths, wisdom, and diversity of its older members and provides an integrated network of services to meet their needs and enhance their quality of life.*

### Our Mission as Public and Private Partners Serving Older Adults

The mission statement describes our scope of authority and responsibility in supporting older adults in Santa Clara County. Our mission is as follows:

*The government and community organizations of the City of San José and the County of Santa Clara share a strong commitment to advance the well-being of older adults. We demonstrate this commitment to support older adults, their families and caregivers by working together to:*

- *Plan and coordinate services.*
- *Recommend allocation of funding and other resources for services, programs, and initiatives.*
- *Provide direct services.*
- *Educate the community about older adult needs and available community resources.*
- *Advocate for public policies that enhance the quality of life of the older population.*

## Our Goals for Supporting Older Adults

Goals chart the direction we will take to advance the well-being of older adults in the community. Our goals are to:

1. *Ensure that older adults' essential needs are met.*
2. *Maximize older adults' independence.*
3. *Promote older adults' health and wellness.*
4. *Encourage older adults' community engagement.*
5. *Leverage and optimize efforts and resources that serve older adults.*



## Our Objectives and Strategies for Meeting These Goals

Objectives articulate more specific milestones for measuring progress toward our high-level goals. Strategies describe how a community is going to meet its objectives. For this plan, an objective and a series of strategies were developed to respond to each facet of the ten areas of need that arose in the needs assessment.

The table below presents the ten prominent areas of need identified in the needs assessment, the community's objectives for mitigating those needs, and references to the pages of the plan where strategies for achieving those objectives are located.

Area of Need	Strategic Objective	Page Reference for Strategies
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase seniors' accessibility to affordable housing.</li> <li>• Increase availability of affordable home repair.</li> </ul>	38
<b>Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase access to information about services for older adults and their care networks.</li> </ul>	39
<b>Language</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce language barriers to accessing information about services for older adults and their care networks.</li> </ul>	40
<b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase availability of paratransit services for older adults.</li> <li>• Increase assistance to older adults when boarding public transit.</li> <li>• Increase older adults' access to public transportation.</li> <li>• Increase coordination of transportation among senior centers.</li> </ul>	41
<b>In-Home Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase availability of affordable in-home care services.</li> <li>• Increase availability of care management services.</li> </ul>	43
<b>Caregiver Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase access to caregiver support services.</li> </ul>	45
<b>Health Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of health professionals with gerontology/geriatric training.</li> <li>• Strengthen linkages between health care and long-term care.</li> </ul>	46
<b>Senior Center Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of senior centers that provide access to information and assistance services, including legal assistance, and management and coordination services for people who need in-home care or assisted living.</li> <li>• Improve senior centers' capacity to serve the disparate interests of baby boomers and older seniors.</li> </ul>	48
<b>Leadership &amp; Coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a formalized leadership structure that improves the coordination, prioritization, and funding of aging services.</li> </ul>	50
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase funding for service strategies that impact older adults' most prominent needs.</li> </ul>	53

## NEXT STEPS

This plan will only add value to the community of Santa Clara County if it is utilized—if it becomes a blueprint for action. To this end, the final section of the plan provides guidance on implementing the strategies for addressing older adults' needs in Santa Clara County. Specifically, Section 5 suggests the timing for implementing each strategy and the organizations well-suited to take the lead on each effort.

As Section 5 indicates, the Leadership and Coordination strategies must be implemented first—these form the infrastructure for coordinated and effective implementation of all other strategies. A small team will need to take responsibility to jump start the process and help to convene a Leadership Group of funders and policy makers, and a Service Coordination and Advocacy Group that represents a broad coalition of organizations that serve older adults and their families in Santa Clara County.



This governance and advocacy structure must be coordinated and countywide—one that pulls together the disparate efforts and commissions currently in effect throughout Santa Clara County—so that service fragmentation is minimized. This structure would make joint funding decisions, advocate a common platform, share information on emerging and existing service needs, and draw in partners to implement the plan's strategies.

Perhaps the most pervasive theme that surfaced from the input of over 1,100 Santa Clara County community members was that the service providers of this county—public and private alike—care deeply about the well-being of their older adult members. Implementing this plan, through a coordinated and collaborative infrastructure, will leverage and optimize that dedication and commitment.